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In Your Presence | Know Your Love

George Henson

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In Your Presence I Know Your Love

George Henson

What can I say that Michelangelo
Has not already carved in marble,
 Strong, sinuous musculature
 Wrought out of stone,
 Finessed with a master's hand,
 Chiseled over time, and left
 Unapologetically naked,
 Giving birth to majestic form,
In spite of the frailty of both stone and man,
 Elevating a boy to the pantheon of
 Renaissance gods,
 More regal than popes or Ceasars,
 More noble than princes or pontiffs?
 What chapel ceiling could I paint,
 Resplendent and majestic,
Displaying holy hues of life and light,
 The Creation of Adam
 The innocence of man,
 Pure and chaste,
 Beneficent in God's eyes,
 Absent mortality?
 What sonnet could I write
 That Petrarch,
 Enraptured by Laura's beauty,
 Hasn't already penned?
 How could I, in 14 lines,
 Through metaphor and simile,
 Through meter and rhyme,

Describe your countenance
In poetic eclipse?
And if, as Petrarch claimed, the sun did pale,
More beautiful are you still.
What fault is it of Apollo
If Cupid did mischievously strike him
With golden arrow,
So that he would love in vain,
And wear a Laurel
As a reminder of love's bitter sting?
What manner of love would dare
What monologue or soliloquy,
As a token of noble pride,
Hold love prisoner,
Forever framed in arrogant vain glory?
And if you had a heart
Too soon made glad,
More glad would I be
To have you freely by my side.
What silence could I imagine
So intimate in its understanding,
And delicate in its meaning,
That Neruda has not already sung?
So, I speak of you with a softness
That love's quiet absence endures.
In your absence, I sense your presence.
In your silence, I hear your voice.
In your distance, I feel your embrace.
In your presence, I know your love.